THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Financing of relief expenditure in the wake of natural calamities in the country is carried out in accordance with the recommendations of Finance Commission, from time to time. There are two schemes for providing assistance towards immediate relief in the wake of natural calamities *viz.* Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) and National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF). Damage to crops due to frost / cold wave is not one of the natural calamities admissible for assistance from CRF/NCCF.

Potential of tuna fish in Lakshadweep

786. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a lot of potential of tuna fish in and around Lakshadweep;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Ministry has decided to purchase ships and equipments specialized in catching tuna fish in the area; and

(c) if so, how far training and other facilities have been given to the residents of Lakshadweep to increase their catch of tuna fish?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) Yes, Sir. The estimated tuna potential in Lakshadweep is about 50,000 metric tonnes.

(b) Yes, Sir. The Lakshadweep Administration has proposed to acquire a mother vessel and introduce gillnetter cum longliners, mechanized tuna pole and line fishing boats, fish aggregating devices etc. in order to exploit the rich tuna fish resources in the island waters.

(c) Necessary training to the fishermen of Lakshadweep islands to exploit tuna fish resources is provided through Fishery Survey of India (FSI) and other fishery related institutions.

Loss of crops due to spurious pesticides

787. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the spurious pesticides being manufactured and sold in the market, destroying crops worth Rs. 6000 crore a year;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken to detect the source of such spurious pesticides and punish them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The Government has received representations from the pesticide industry regarding manufacture and sale of spurious pesticides in the market. A news item published in the newspaper Business Standard dated 22.9.2008 has mentioned annual crop loss worth Rs.6,000 crore due to spurious pesticides.